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Republicans join together to fight for Michigan jobs

Lansing – Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema (R-Wyoming) last week announced an unprecedented proposal to provide much-needed job opportunities for Michigan residents.

Sen. Shirley Johnson (R-Royal Oak) said the proposal would help create manufacturing jobs, spur new small-business investment for more job opportunities and provide incentives to expand the state's slow-moving economy by getting Michigan residents back to work.

"The legislation will make job growth and retention a priority," Johnson said. "We need to create more job opportunities for Michigan residents and make sure jobs stay in the state."

The plan would:

- Create Tool & Die Recovery Zones to provide tax relief similar to existing Renaissance Zones. The bill is scheduled for introduction Tuesday, Nov. 4.
- Reauthorize, strengthen and provide more accountability for the Michigan Economic Growth Authority, which expires on Dec. 31. MEGA is the state's main tax-incentive granting authority used to spur economic development. The bill is scheduled for introduction Tuesday, Nov. 4.
- Create a venture capital investment incentive by offering income and Single Business Tax breaks to those who might lose money investing in Michigan start-up businesses. The bill is planned for introduction Tuesday, Nov. 4.

- Establish a Clean Michigan Initiative revolving loan program to clean up abandoned brownfield sites. This program would transfer the remaining CMI funding into a grant and loan program. The bill was introduced last week and currently is in the Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee.
- Provide tax incentives for small start-up businesses by exempting them from most taxes for the first two years of operation then phasing in tax liabilities for the following four years.
- Improve Michigan's infrastructure by expediting the 2002 voter approved Sewer Bond Initiative to allow communities to start construction projects sooner.
- Call on the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to provide a small-business "czar" and a manufacturing "czar" with the experience and vision to focus on small-business start-ups as well as retaining and creating manufacturing jobs.
- Implement a Forestry Initiative that would adopt forest management changes to protect the environment and create new job opportunities by strengthening Michigan's timber industry.

The Senate has teamed up with the House of Representatives to make this plan a success by taking action to provide more jobs for Michigan residents as quickly as possible.

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